

Contact Officer: Richard Dunne

KIRKLEES COUNCIL

HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY PANEL

Thursday 19th August 2021

Present: Councillor Habiban Zaman (Chair)
Councillor Aafaq Butt
Councillor Bill Armer
Councillor Lesley Warner
Councillor Fazila Loonat

Co-optees David Rigby
Lynne Keady

In attendance: Stacey Appleyard – Healthwatch Kirklees
David Birkenhead – Calderdale and Huddersfield NHS
Foundation Trust (CHFT)
Suzanne Dunkley – CHFT
Emily Parry-Harries – Public Health Kirklees
Helen Hunter – Healthwatch Kirklees
Andy Smith – Mid Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust
Judith Stones -Public Protection Kirklees Council

Observers: Peter Bradshaw
Cllr Elizabeth Smaje

Apologies: Councillor Vivien Lees-Hamilton

- 1 Minutes of previous meeting**
The minutes of the meeting held on the 8 July 2021 were approved as a correct record.
- 2 Interests**
Cllr Lesley Warner declared an interest as a member of the Calderdale and Huddersfield NHS Foundation Trust Membership Council.
- 3 Admission of the public**
All items were taken in public session.
- 4 Deputations/Petitions**
No deputations or petitions were received.
- 5 Public Question Time**
No questions were asked.

6 Impact of Covid-19 on Kirklees Acute Hospital Trusts

The Panel welcomed David Birkenhead and Suzanne Dunkley from Calderdale and Huddersfield NHS Foundation Trust and Andy Smith from Mid Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust to the meeting.

Mr Smith outlined details of the Mid Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust's (MYHT) decision to suspend planned inpatient surgery at Dewsbury Hospital due to the extreme pressures and demand the Trust was facing for acute beds at Pinderfields hospital.

Mr Smith explained that there were a number of reasons for this action that included higher demand than normal in the Trust's emergency department; longer than average patients stays in hospital; and challenges moving patients that were medically fit for discharge back into the community.

Mr Smith stated that to try and mitigate the impact of the suspension of planned inpatient surgery the Trust had increased the numbers of patients being admitted for day case surgery.

Mr Smith informed the Panel that these arrangements would be reviewed in three weeks. The Panel heard that NHSI had requested that there was a whole system wide response to this issue and work was taking place with local authorities to ensure that patients fit for discharge could be placed back into the community.

In response to a question regarding what was meant by offloading patients Mr Smith explained that this referred to patients being taken off ambulances and the responsibility of care handed to the hospital.

A question and answer session followed that covered a number of issues that included:

- An explanation of the activity that was normally carried out in wards 12 and 14 at Dewsbury hospital.
- An explanation of what was meant by optimised for discharge.
- Clarification that P2 patients were priority two patients that were classed as needing urgent surgery.
- Details of the increase in day case surgery at MYHT.
- An overview of the work that was taking place to maximise the number of cases going through day surgery.
- Confirmation that patients that were due to have inpatient surgery at Dewsbury had been sent a letter explaining the position and that their surgery would now be undertaken at either Pinderfields or Pontefract.
- Confirmation that patients whose surgery has been transferred to Pontefract were being helped with their transport needs.
- An overview of the challenges to the system wide response for arranging medically fit patients to be discharged from hospital.
- The focus on the use of convalescence homes as one pathway to provide interim care for discharged patients.

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- Confirmation that Calderdale and Huddersfield NHS Found Trust (CHFT) faced similar issues with the timely discharge of patients.
- An overview of the pressures that the whole system was currently facing.
- A question on the approach that was being taken to providing appropriate support and recognition to unpaid carers.
- The work being done by CHFT to provide patients with virtual access to their families and relatives.
- An overview of the impact that the pandemic was having on NHS staff.
- Details of the emerging impact on staff that included signs of mental health issues and trauma.
- An overview of the support and flexibility being provided to staff at CHFT.
- Details of the numbers of staff that were absent at any one time due to self-isolation including household isolation.
- Details of some of the positive aspects of the pandemic particularly from a digital point of view.
- An overview of the work that was taking place to provide health and wellbeing support to the CHFT workforce.
- Details of the public feedback received by healthwatch which had indicated more negative feedback than would be normally expected for hospital services.
- An explanation that the significant pressures and challenges that the NHS were having to deal with would lead to more variable patient experiences.
- The approach taken by healthwatch in working constructively with hospital trusts so NHS colleagues could understand the key issues being highlighted by patients and the wider public.
- A request from healthwatch for details of the needs of peoples presenting at emergency departments to understand what was driving the increase in demand.
- Confirmation that letters were being sent to those people across West Yorkshire experiencing delays in their planned care to keep them informed of progress.
- Details of the West Yorkshire and Harrogate mental health and emotional support service for all health and social care staff in the region.
- An overview of the position of hospital acquired Covid infections and details of the impact the pandemic was having on clinical effectiveness.
- Details of the process for getting NHS staff who were having to self-isolate back to work.
- Details of the work being undertaken by the trusts to identify better and new ways of working and to optimise facilities in order to continue to deliver services as quickly and efficiently as possible.
- Confirmation that all hospital patients were tested prior to discharge to a care facility.
- Confirmation that patients with covid who had received both covid jabs experienced less severe symptoms.
- Confirmation that hospital patients suffering with long Covid were requiring ongoing support from social care.
- An overview of the process and approach taken by the trusts to provide feedback to government to highlight how difficult the situation was including the impact on the mental health and wellbeing of frontline staff.
- A concern regarding the mental health and wellbeing of those staff who will continue to work remotely on a long-term basis.

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- The work being undertaken by the trusts to reach out to the local community to understand the challenges for some people in using and accessing digital technology for healthcare.
- The importance of providing alternative pathways to care for those people who are unable to access a virtual appointment.
- The approach being undertaken by the trusts to provide digital support including in some cases digital equipment to help support people access digital pathways to care and virtual access to family who are in hospital.
- A question regarding the age profile of patients who are currently hospitalised due to Covid.
- Confirmation from CHFT that they were receiving a younger cohort of patients with the virus.
- Confirmation that getting vaccinated was the best form of protection against the virus.
- Details of the work that MYHT were doing in reviewing and contacting patients whose planned surgery had been delayed.
- Details of CHFT's buddy system for patients whose planned surgery had been delayed.

RESOLVED –

1. That the information presented by the hospital trusts be noted.
2. A request for MYHT to provide a written update on the position regarding the suspension of the provision of planned inpatient surgery at Dewsbury in time for the meeting scheduled to take place on 7 October 2021.

7

Covid-19 Update

The Panel welcomed Emily Parry-Harries Head of Public Health Kirklees and Judith Stones Acting Operational Manager Public Protection to the meeting.

Ms Parry-Harries presented an update on the local position of Covid-19 that included: an overview of infection rates in Kirklees; details of the rates of infection in various areas across Kirklees; uptake rates for vaccination by age and area and the comparison with other upper tier local authorities.

Ms Stones informed the Panel of the approach being taken by Public Protection to offering advice and guidance to local businesses on Covid-19 health and safety measures.

Ms Stones explained that following the introduction of step 4 in the government road map elements of the covid-19 legislation had been repealed which included the withdrawal of legal requirements such as the use of face coverings in certain premises and the requirement for hospitality premises to have test and trace information.

Ms Stones outlined details of the proactive work being carried out by the Public Protection team that included visiting business premises across Kirklees to provide advice on Covid-19 controls and safety measures.

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Ms Stones informed the Panel that the Public Protection Team also carried out door knocking visits to every positive Covid-19 case in Kirklees to ensure that individuals were self-isolating and to provide help and support if required.

Ms Stones stated that in conjunction with public health the Public Protection Team were visiting business and employers who had suffered Covid outbreaks and increases in case rates to assess their risk assessments and offer support and guidance.

Ms Stones outlined the approach to dealing with local events and public spaces where there were likely to be high numbers of people that included details of the work undertaken by the Safety Advisory Group.

Ms Stones informed the Panel of the local enforcement options that included an overview of the approach taken by the Public Protection Team and the parameters for enforcement action.

Ms Parry-Harries presented the approach to dealing with the Covid booster vaccination programme and flu vaccinations and explained that public health was still waiting for a decision from the JCVI on who would be included in any booster programme that took place.

Ms Parry-Harries outlined details of the cohorts that would most likely be eligible for a booster jab. Ms Parry-Harries explained that due to the restrictions and extra care being taken by people flu levels over the last 18 months had been low.

Ms Parry-Harries informed the panel that respiratory infections in younger children had begun to rise outside of the normal winter period which was in part due to the lifting of restrictions and subsequent increase in social activities.

Ms Parry-Harries outlined details of a short report on long Covid from the Office of National Statistics that stated that there was no universal agreed definition for long Covid that covered a broad range of symptoms.

Ms Parry-Harries stated that it would be helpful for the panel to invite the Council's Principal Occupational Therapist and Clinical Commissioning Group colleagues to a future meeting to look at the work they had been undertaking in establishing clinics to support people with long Covid.

Ms Parry-Harries presented details of the investment in a long Covid plan that was aimed at enhancing the support for people suffering with long Covid.

A question and answer session ensued that covered a number of issues that included:

- An explanation of the work that was undertaken in analysing the rates of infection across Kirklees.
- Confirmation that the infection levels were not consistently concentrated in any one ward.

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- Details of areas in Kirklees where the uptake of the vaccine was lower than public health would like and the proactive work taking place to promote the benefits of having the vaccine.
- An emphasis on the need to focus on being considerate and kind to people many of whom were still very anxious about the virus.
- That details of the uptake for financial assistance while self-isolating would be provided to the panel.
- Confirmation that the lessons learned by the local authority from handling outbreaks of Covid were being used to inform the help and support provided to businesses and employers and the approach to hosting large scale events.
- Confirmation that most businesses in Kirklees were following the Covid guidance and maintaining robust safety measures.
- A question on the merits of engaging more with elected members in attempt to widen the channels of communication regarding Covid and the vaccination programme.
- An overview of Kirklees pop up vaccination clinics.
- How elected members could help by promoting the messages on the importance of the vaccination programme to the hard to reach communities in Kirklees.
- A request that the current data on vaccination uptake in Kirklees is shared with the panel.
- An overview of the approach being taken by the Council to start bringing staff back to work in the Council offices.
- The importance of people getting clinical advice to assess if their symptoms were genuinely long Covid as opposed to another cause.
- Confirmation that the Council's executive team were looking at the approach to a wider resumption of in person meetings for the Council's various committees.
- An overview of the work being undertaken by the Council to try and encourage and educate people to behave in a kind and considerate way to others during the pandemic.
- The importance of regular testing and if positive to take the requirement to self-isolate seriously.

RESOLVED –

That Judith Stones and Emily Parry-Harries be thanked for attending the meeting and that the information presented be noted.

8 Update from Healthwatch Kirklees

Due to time constraints for the attendees from Healthwatch the panel agreed to defer the item and reschedule the discussion for the October meeting.

9 Work Programme 2021/22

A discussion took place on the panel's agenda plan with a focus on the items scheduled to take place at the October and November meetings.

Following the decision to reschedule the Healthwatch item to the October meeting the panel agreed to move the Kirklees Care Homes Programme Board update to the November meeting.

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A discussion took place on the merits of retaining the Covid-19 update from public health as a standing item on the agenda. It was agreed that consideration would be given to including a short-written update on the agenda which would allow the panel an opportunity to discuss or flag any areas of interest and/or concern.

A general discussion took place on potential items for future meetings that covered a number of areas that included:

- A proposal to invite CQC to the meeting with a focus on adult social care.
- A request that consideration be given to looking at the impact of Covid on maternity services.
- A proposal to consider looking at the impact of Covid on the non-acute elements of the health and adult social care sector.
- The importance of reviewing the work taking place on the integration of health and adult social care.
- A proposal to arrange an informal workshop with the Economy and Neighbourhoods scrutiny panel to look at the impact of air pollution.
- A request that consideration be given to receiving an update on the proposals to merge the Gateway to Care Service and the Locala Single Point of Contact Service and the redesign of direct payments.
- A concern that the funding for the mental health and wellbeing of young people was no longer a priority.